Launching of new schemes

1204. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry implements only one centrally sponsored scheme;

(b) the reasons for not launching more schemes for promoting agro and rural industries in the country;

(c) whether Government would consider launching more Central schemes; and

(d) if so, the details of plans chalked out in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Government (in the Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries) implements only one Centrally sponsored scheme, namely, Scheme for Co-operativisation in the Coir Sector. It has been decided to phase out the scheme in view of inadequate response from the State Governments.

However, the Government has been implementing the following Central sector schemes for promoting agro and rural industries in the country that adequately meet the requirements of this sector:

(I) Khadi

(i) Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate (ISEC) Scheme.

(ii) Rebate Scheme on sales of khadi.

(iii) Product Development, Design Intervention and Packaging (PRODIP) Scheme (both for khadi and village industries).

(iv) Rural Industries Service Centre (RISC) Scheme (both for khadi and village industries).

(v) Assistance to Khadi and Village Industry (KVI) units to participate in exhibitions at the national, sub-nation levels, etc., for improving marketing of products (both for khadi and village industries).

(II) Village Industries

(i) Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP). (ii) Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY).

(III) Coir

(i) Development of Production Infrastructure Scheme for coir production through supply of equipment and machinery at subsidised rates.

(ii) Research and Development Schemes.

(iii) Mahila Coir Yojana.

(c) and (d) Government has recently approved implementation of the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) in 100 clusters of khadi, village and coir industries over five years beginning 2005-2006. The scheme envisages assistance for setting up of common facility centers (CFC), quality improvement, training and capacity building, development of new products, improved packaging, new design, market promotion, etc.

Tax benefits to Pharma companies

1205. SHRIMATI PREMACARIAPPA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give tax benefits and incentives to pharmaceutical companies to produce second line drugs for AIDS;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what planning has been made for the second line of drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) One of the main objectives of the Pharmaceutical Policy 2002, is to ensure abundant availability at reasonable prices within the country of good quality essential pharmaceuticals of mass consumption (which also includes Anti AIDS Drugs).

As per Custom Notification No. 21/2002-Cus. dated 1-3-2002, as amended, certain AIDS drugs are exempted from custom duty as well as additional duty and some others are attracting concessional rate of Custom